

Gas Programs and Services

On demand training at your utility on your schedule



Gas Circuit Rider: Standard Program

Get the essentials

MMUA is a one-stop shop for natural gas utilities. The **Gas Circuit Rider** (GCR) core program is our flagship offering, providing specialized support for member gas utilities. We ensure Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) compliance is at the core of the program. This service includes both operator technical training and regulatory compliance assistance.

MMUA offers an annual Gas School at MMUA's Training Center in Marshall. GCR program participants are eligible for complimentary registration (a value of more than \$550 per person) to the annual Gas School.

GCR program services

The primary service offered by the Gas Circuit Rider standard program is six days of dedicated training and evaluation.

For many program participants, the schedule of services could consist of:

- Pre-inspection evaluation (1 day)
- Assistance with a Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety (MNOPS) inspection, including field and records, operation and maintenance (O&M) records, gas emissions, and more (2–3 days)
- Covered task evaluations—typically plastic pipe fusion (1 day)
- Additional compliance assistance with manual or program updates (1 day)

The GCR standard program provides additional benefits to keep personnel current on best practices and qualifications, including emergency plan training, a monthly newsletter, Midwest Energy Association (MEA) membership, training modules, operator qualification tracking, state and federal reporting reminders with links to important federal and state websites, 24/7 emergency assistance, procedure review/updates, and more.



Meet the instructor



Dennis Danielson is the manager of the MMUA Natural Gas Circuit Rider Program. He leads and coordinates all gas services for the organization.

Dennis has more than two decades of experience in municipal gas operations, working in facilities of varying size. He brings an exacting attention to detail and extensive regulatory knowledge to the role.

Gas Circuit Rider Plus

Enhance the essentials

The **Gas Circuit Rider Plus (GCR+)** program is designed to enhance the Gas Circuit Rider core program, offering additional flexibility and customization for utilities wanting more time and services.

GCR+ program benefits

Many utilities take full advantage of their Gas Circuit Rider core benefits each year by involving MMUA in program manual review, maintenance, and inspections. This often leaves little time for hands-on technical instruction and other activities that can save costs in the long-term for the utility.

MMUA created the GCR+ program to help utilities maintain and expand their proficiency and excellence in natural gas operations. The program is open to all gas members, regardless of participation in the GCR core program.

Through the GCR+ program, utilities can purchase fully customized sessions for:

- Training and evaluation
- Additional inspection assistance
- Qualifying operators for covered tasks
- Training new employees
- Leak inspection training
- Program development/manual updates
- Regulator/meter assistance
- Additional topics specific to the utility

New employee training

MMUA is here to help get inexperienced or newly hired personnel up to speed.

Through the GCR+ program, MMUA will work with you to develop an operator qualifications plan to train and qualify recent hires on covered tasks for your natural gas system. MMUA will also set up new users in MEA's Energy U online training portal with e-confirm for real-time operator qualification record information.

Program topics

This program helps identify areas for improvement within your system. Through the natural gas programs, you can receive training on the following topics and more:

- Fusion
- Locating
- Regulator inspection and relief
- Customer/commercial meter set
- Pressure testing
- Purging
- Inside/outside gas leak investigation
- Leak survey
- Line marker
- Cathodic protection: pipe to soil, atmospheric corrosion
- Valve: inspection, partial operation
- Installation of gas services and mains: plowing, trenching, depth of cover, inspection for damage

There are 34 municipal gas utilities in Minnesota.

Minnesota's natural gas resources are limited, necessitating heavy reliance on interstate pipelines, especially from neighboring states like South Dakota and North Dakota, as well as from Canada. Despite lacking significant natural gas reserves, the state operates as a transit point for gas distribution to other states, with a substantial portion channeled to Iowa and Wisconsin. The industrial sector dominates gas consumption, followed by residential, commercial, and power sectors.

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